



# City of Morgan Hill

## City Council Staff Report

File #: 15-068, Agenda Date: 3/18/2015, Version: 1

### **CITY COUNCIL STAFF REPORT** **MEETING DATE: MARCH 18, 2015**

PREPARED BY: Edith Ramirez, Economic Development Manager/Community Development  
APPROVED BY: City Manager

### **GATEWAY ART PROJECT**

#### **RECOMMENDATION(S):**

1. Accept report.
2. Provide any direction deemed appropriate.

#### **COUNCIL PRIORITIES SUPPORTED:**

##### **Ongoing Priorities**

Preserving and Cultivating Public Trust  
Maintaining Fiscal Responsibility  
Supporting Youth

#### **NARRATIVE:**

On May 21, 2014, the City Council approved the Downtown Placemaking Investment Strategy which provides direction regarding the investment of former Redevelopment Agency bond proceeds in the downtown core. The goal of the Strategy is to help make Downtown the most walkable, bike-friendly, urban, family-oriented, and transit oriented neighborhood in Morgan Hill. The Downtown Morgan Hill Placemaking Investment Strategy identifies a number of public works improvements intended to transform Downtown into an interesting, vital, prosperous, and sustainable destination. These improvements include the redevelopment of the Downtown Opportunity Sites, the creation of two parks, a trail to the Nob Hill water tank, the construction of a parking structure with a robust art component and other streetscape improvements. The Downtown Morgan Hill Placemaking Investment Strategy also allocated \$500,000 toward art, festival lighting, and wayfinding features as well as amenities that enhance public spaces.

Placemaking efforts to date have included: 1) a Creative Placemaking Symposium on September 19, 2014. At the Symposium over 200 community residents participated in a conversation regarding the streetscape projects, efforts and strategies to make Downtown more pedestrian friendly, new trail and park improvements and the redevelopment of the Downtown Development Opportunity Sites; 2) a Complete Streets Pilot Program intended to calm traffic and make downtown a pedestrian-friendly business district; 3) and a Creative Placemaking Mini Grant Program, that will produce temporary and permanent art projects to enhance Downtown with visual art, landscape, design and other

placemaking projects. Twelve art and placemaking projects were approved by the City Council on January 21, 2015 and many of them are expected to be installed in April/May.

### Downtown Gateway Art Project

The next phase of the Placemaking effort includes Gateway Art Projects as envisioned in the Downtown Streetscape Design Concepts prepared by Joni Janecki and Associates, presented to Council on October 1, 2014. The Downtown Streetscape Design Concepts embrace the theme of “Healthy Living Morgan Hill”, drawing from Morgan Hill’s rich resources, climate, setting, and history. The design concepts are intended to bring together the past, present and future, celebrating Morgan Hill’s rich agricultural heritage and emphasizing sustainability for long term health.

Gateways are included in the concept designs and are envisioned as follows:

*“Arrival in Downtown Morgan Hill will be announced through a series of Gateways. Strategically located at prominent intersections, as well as along the “Old Monterey Highway,” a series of public art pieces and welcoming gateway features to announce and celebrate arrival into Downtown, referencing the area’s agricultural roots.”*

The location of possible gateway and features include:

- Monterey Road immediately north of Main and south of Dunne
- Near the intersections of Butterfield at Main and Butterfield at Dunne
- In the new proposed parks on 3<sup>rd</sup> Street (3<sup>rd</sup> and Depot or 3<sup>rd</sup> west of Monterey)
- The Nob Hill Water Tank
- Existing railroad trestle and overpass along Old Monterey Road

It is recommended that the Granary Silos between Depot Street and the railroad tracks be added to the list of possible locations. As a key landmark of Morgan Hill, a painting or lighting project could create a significant statement and showcase these Downtown structures.

### Call for Artists

Staff has been working with a subcommittee of the Library, Culture, and Arts Commission (LCAC) and the El Toro Culture and Arts Committee of the Morgan Hill Community Foundation (ETCAC) to develop a “Call for Artists” to submit qualifications for the Gateway Art Project. The “Call for Artists” seeks public art to enliven the landscape and contribute to the identity of this community. This “Call” invites professional artists, designers, and landscape architects, or groups composed of such professionals to submit qualifications.

The review and approval process for the Gateway Art Project will include a Community Panel made up of representatives from LCAC, ETCAC, the Downtown Association, the Chamber of Commerce, a local landscape architect, and city staff. The Community Panel will do the first review of applications

and will select up to ten artists based on the artists' qualifications and experience.

The second group, made up of community members and professional artists, will form a Jury that will decide which artists will be invited to develop concepts. Up to four (4) artists will be selected to complete Conceptual Designs supported by \$1,000 Conceptual Design Agreements. The Jury will recommend selected finalist(s) to LCAC to consider for commission(s) to fully design, fabricate and install the art work. Following LCAC's review, a recommendation will be made to the City Council for approval.

### **Community Engagement**

Community engagement proposed for this project envisions an active process that would involve the community and invite feedback early in the process. Exhibit A identifies the proposed review and approval process and community engagement. The community and artist will be invited to learn about the project early on and attend workshops.

A survey will be created asking the community to provide feedback on the type of gateway art they would like to see as well as questions about what Morgan Hill means to them and other information that will inform the selected artists before concepts are developed. Finally, a meet and greet with the finalists will be scheduled so that community members can meet and engage with the artists. The intent is to engage the community early on and allow for the feedback to influence the art concepts before these are submitted to the City for review.

While the community will have an opportunity to actively influence the design concepts, it will be the responsibility of the Jury and LCAC to recommend and City Council to select artists based on their concepts, project budget and ability to deliver within the project timeframe. Community engagement will also include website, e-mail and social media updates. The community will also be invited to participate in the LCAC and City Council public hearings.

Up to seventy-five thousand dollars (\$75,000) of downtown bond monies can be used for the Gateway Art Project. In addition, the City is seeking a grant of \$75,000 from the National Endowment for the Arts "Our Town" Program, which will be announced in July 2015. If awarded, project funds will grow from \$75,000 to \$150,000, which would allow for multiple projects to be funded. The maximum grant funds are \$75,000, which will cover all costs including full design with engineered drawings, and fabrication and installation with artist oversight.

The schedule (Exhibit A) envisions the call for artists being issued in early March and qualifications due mid-April. A first cut of up to ten artists will be made by the Community Panel at the end of April and the Jury will select up to four finalists for a community "Meet and Greet" in mid May. Concept design submittal and approval is anticipated for June/July, which would allow for full design, fabrication and installation to take place in the second part of the year. This is an extremely tight schedule, seeking to have the project funded and completed by December 23, 2015. If the City receives the NEA grant, additional art works could be funded with a project delivery schedule of 2016.

### **PRIOR CITY COUNCIL AND COMMISSION ACTIONS:**

On May 21, 2014, the City Council approved the Downtown Creative Placemaking Investment Strategy which identified Placemaking as a key component of the Downtown. On March 4, 2015 LCAC subcommittee members provided a verbal update on the Gateway Art Project to the Commission and scheduled a special meeting to receive a full report on March 17, 2015. Staff will

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provide a verbal update to the Council on March 18<sup>th</sup> of the feedback received at the March 17<sup>th</sup> LCAC meeting.

**FISCAL AND RESOURCE IMPACT:**

The Downtown Morgan Hill Placemaking Investment Strategy allocated \$500,000 to art, festival lighting, features and wayfinding from former RDA Downtown bond monies. The cost to proceed with the recommended Gateway Art Project is \$75,000 to be funded by Successor Agency Bond funds. Additionally, staff applied for a NEA grant of \$75,000, which if awarded, will grow the project budget to \$150,000.

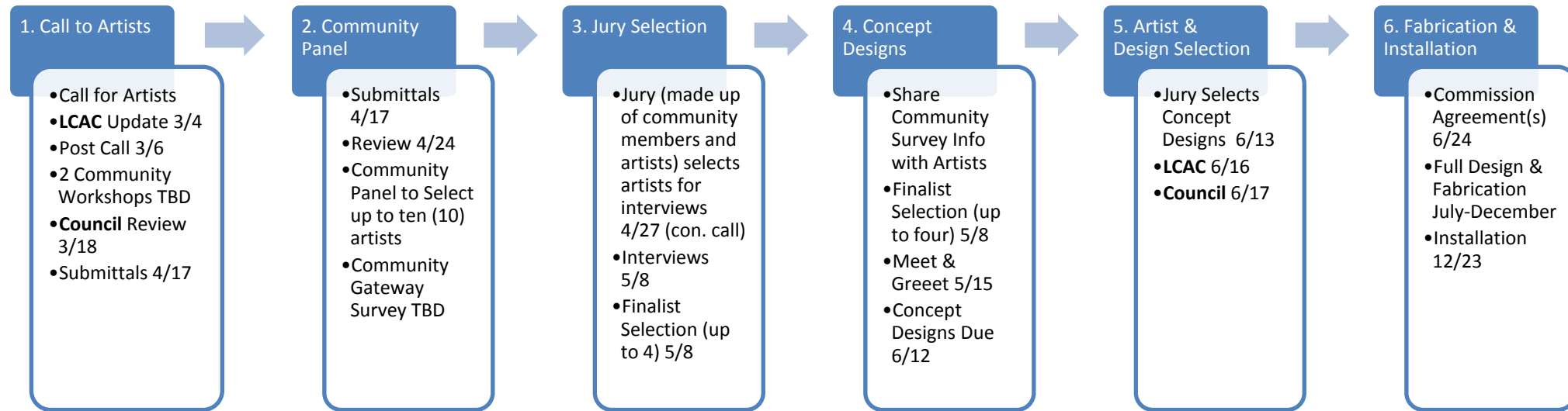
**CEQA (California Environmental Quality Act):**

Not a Project

**LINKS/ATTACHMENTS:**

Exhibit A-Gateway Project Review and Approval Process

# Gateway Project Review & Approval Process



## Community Engagement:

- 6 Email Blasts—Throughout
- 2 Community Workshops (with artists & community)—April
- 1 Community Survey—April
- 1 Meet & Greet (with selected artists)—5/15
- Social Media —Throughout
- Website—Throughout

## Community Partners:

- LCAC
- El Toro Culture & Arts (ETCAC) of Community Foundation
- MHDA
- MHCC
- Jury that includes professional artists
- Local Morgan Hill Landscape Architect

## Public Hearings:

- 3 LCAC —Date in March, 5/5, 6/16
- 2 CC—3/18, 6/17

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